

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 8332

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MX

SUBJ: SUPPLEMENTARY BIO DATA ON JOSE LOPEZ-PORTILLO, PRI'S
CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENCY OF MEXICO

1. JOSE LOPEZ-PORTILLO Y PACHECO WAS BORN IN MEXICO CITY,
JUNE 16, 1920. HIS FATHER, ORIGINALLY OF THE STATE OF JALISCO,
PLAYED A (VERY) SMALL PART IN THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION AND LATER
PLAYED A ROLE IN THE NATIONALIZATION OF PETROLEUM IN 1938.

2. LOPEZ-PORTILLO BEGAN STUDIES IN THE FACULTY OF LAW AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY (UNAM)
IN 1939. IN 1946 HE RECEIVED A LAW DEGREE (LICENTIATE), AND
THE FOLLOWING YEAR HE WAS NAMED TO THE CHAIR OF "GENERAL
THEORY OF THE STATE" IN THE LAW FACULTY OF HIS ALMA MATER, A
POST WHICH HE HELD UNTIL 1958. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF THE TEXT-
BOOK "GENESIS AND GENERAL THEORY OF THE MODERN STATE."

3. LOPEZ-PORTILLO JOINED THE PRI IN 1945, BUT HIS FRIENDSHIP
AND COLLABORATION WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA GO BACK TO THEIR
YOUTH. ECHEVERRIA AND LOPEZ-PORTILLO WORKED TOGETHER ON A
STUDENT NEWSPAPER IN 1940, AND IN 1941 BOTH RECEIVED
FELLOWSHIPS FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE FOR SPECIAL
STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTIAGO. THE TWO SAILED
TOGETHER IN THE ENGINE ROOM OF A CHILEAN OIL FREIGHTER;
ON THEIR RETURN TRIP, THEY SAILED FROM VALPARISO TO
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SAN FRANCISCO.

4. LOPEZ-PORTILLO'S CAREER IN GOVERNMENT BEGAN IN 1959 WHEN HE WAS NAMED TECHNICAL ADVISOR FOR A DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT OF NATIONAL PATRIMONY. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MORE IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSTS HE HAS HELD SINCE THEN:

A) 1960-65 DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FEDERAL COMMISSION FOR MATERIAL IMPROVEMENT (SEC PATRIMONY)

B) 1965 DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CONSULTIVE JURIDICAL OFFICE (SEC PRESIDENCY)

C) 1965 COORDINATOR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (SEC PRESIDENCY), CHARGED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

D) 1966 MEMBER OF INTERSECRETARIAL COMMISSION (TREASURY-PRESIDENCY), CHARGED WITH THE FORMULATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL PLANS

E) 1968-70 SUBSECRETARY OF PRESIDENCY

F) 1970-72 SUBSECRETARY OF NATIONAL PATRIMONY

G) AUG 1972-MAY 1973 DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FEDERAL ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

H) MAY 28, 1973 - PRESENT SECRETARY OF TREASURY AND PUBLIC CREDIT.

5. LOPEZ-PORTILLO IS MARRIED TO THE FORMER CARMEN ROMANO. THE COUPLE HAVE A SON AND TWO DAUGHTERS: JOSE (21), CARMEN (18), AND PAULINA (16).

6. COMMENT: LOPEZ-PORTILLO WILL BECOME PRESIDENT AT AGE 56, ABOUT EIGHT YEARS OLDER THAN THE AVERAGE MEXICAN PRESIDENT. AS SECRETARY OF TREASURY, LOPEZ-PORTILLO WAS CONSIDERED BY MEXICAN BANKERS AND BUSINESSMEN TO BE FLEXIBLE AND WILLING TO LISTEN, ALTHOUGH THE POWER OF SETTING CONFIDENTIAL

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ECONOMIC POLICY WAS CONSIDERED TO LIE WITH THE PRESIDENT RATHER THAN WITH THE SECRETARY OF TREASURY. EMBOFFS MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE OF LOPEZ-PORTILLO'S PERFORMANCE AS SECRETARY BELIEVE THAT HE DID NOT USE HIS PERSONAL INFLUENCE WITH PRESIDENT SUFFICIENTLY TO OPPOSE THE DEFICIT SPENDING IN THIS ADMINISTRATION WHICH HAS LED TO MEXICO'S RECENT 25 PERCENT INFLATION RATE. THEY WERE IMPRESSED, HOWEVER, AT LOPEZ-PORTILLO'S ABILITY TO MASTER HIS JOB, ESPECIALLY

CONSIDERING HIS BACKGROUND AS A LAWYER RATHER THAN AN ECONOMIST. (ALL REPORTS HAVE STRESSED LOPEZ-PORTILLO'S ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY.) EMBASSY OFFICIALS HAVE FOUND HIM FRIENDLY BUT NOT OPEN ABOUT HIS OWN ATTITUDES TOWARD FISCAL POLICY. ALMOST CERTAINLY THIS REFLECTED HIS SUPPORT OF AND LOYALTY TOWARD THE PRESIDENT.

7. LOPEZ-PORTILLO APPEARS TO UNDERSTAND SOME ENGLISH, BUT HE HAS ALWAYS USED AN INTERPRETER DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY OFFICIALS.

8. FOREGOING SUPPLEMENTS BIOGRAPHIC DATA PREVIOUSLY FURNISHED DEPARTMENT.

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